

REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed on September 24, 2007. Claims 1-9, 13-17 and 21-23 are currently pending in the application, with Claims 1, 13 and 21 being in independent form. It is respectfully submitted that the claims pending in this application, namely Claims 1-9, 13-17 and 21-23, are fully supported by the specification, introduce no new subject matter, and are patentable over the prior art. Favorable review is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-4 and 7-9

Claims 1-4 and 7-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Natarajan et al. (US 6,955,777).

In the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that the Declaration under 37 CFR 1.132 filed in July 6, 2007 is insufficient to overcome the rejection of claims 1-9 and 13-17 based upon Natarajan et al. (US 6,955,777) as set forth in the last Office Action of April 6, 2007. According to the Examiner, Applicants failed to show that the material relied upon in the rejection and the inventions of the rejected claims were invented by the same inventor(s). However, Natarajan et al. is assigned to International Business Machines Corporation. In addition, the subject matter of the present claims, were, at the time the invention was made, subject to an obligation of assignment to, International Business Machines Corporation. Accordingly, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(c)(1), Natarajan et al. cannot preclude patentability of the present claims because Natarajan et al and the present claims have a common assignee. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of these claims is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 5-6 and 13-17 and 21-23

Claims 5-6 and 13-17 and 21-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Natarajan et al. In the Office Action, the Examiner states that although Natarajan et al. do not disclose a source of rinsing liquid, it would have been obvious to one skilled in art to recognize the structure would have required washed/rinsed in between usage to avoid cross contamination. However, it is respectfully submitted that the

With respect to Claims 5-6, it is respectfully submitted that these claims depend on independent Claim 1 and are therefore patentable at least for the same reason that Claim 1 is patentable. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of these claims is respectfully requested.

With respect to Claim 13-17 and Claim 21-23, these claims make no mention of a rinsing liquid. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of these claims is respectfully requested.

In addition, with respect to Claims 13-17, as stated hereinabove, the reference cited and the present claims are assigned to a common assignee.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims now pending in this application, namely Claims 1-9, 13-17 and 21-23 are now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early and favorable consideration of this application is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone or personal interview may facilitate resolution of any remaining matters, he is respectfully requested to contact Applicants undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

No fee is believed to be due for the submission of this amendment. If any fees are required, however, the Commissioner is authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account No. 09-0458.

Respectfully Submitted,

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